



**The Conception of the Venerable and Glorious  
Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John  
Which the Holy Church Celebrates on September 23.**

This came to pass fifteen months before the birth of Christ, after the vision of the Angel that Zacharias, the father of the forerunner, saw in the Temple while he executed the priest's office in the order of his course during the Feast of the Tabernacles, as Tradition bears witness. In this vision, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias and said to him, "Thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John" (Luke 1:13). Knowing that Elizabeth was barren, and that both he and she were elderly, Zacharias did not believe what the Angel told him, although he had before him the example of Abraham and Sarah, of Hannah, mother of the prophet Samuel, and of the other barren women in Israel who gave birth by the power of God. Hence, he was condemned by the Archangel to remain speechless until the fulfillment of these words in their season, which also came to pass (Luke 1:7-24. See also June 24).

Wine and oil allowed.

Text: [The Great Horologion](#) © The Holy Transfiguration Monastery Brookline, Massachusetts 02445  
Icons courtesy The Holy Transfiguration Monastery Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

*Dismissal Hymn. Fourth Tone*  
*Be quick to anticipate*

**R**EJOICE, O thou barren one who hadst not borne until now; for \* lo, in all truth thou hast conceived the lamp of the Sun, and he shall send forth his light \* over all the earth which is afflicted with blindness. \* Dance, O Zacharias, and cry out with great boldness: \* The one to be born is the blest prophet of God Most High.

*Kontakion. First Tone*  
*The soldiers standing guard*

**G**REAT Zacharias now doth rejoice with resplendence; \* Elizabeth his glorious yoke-mate exalteth; \* for she hath conceived divine John the Forerunner worthily, \* whom the great Archangel hath announced with rejoicing, \* whom, as is meet, we men revere as a sacred \* initiate of grace divine.

